



Skipton Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Town Mayor

Councillor Richard Judge

Chief Officer

Louise Close

Town Hall

High Street

Skipton

BD23 1FD

www.skiptontowncouncil.gov.uk



Skipton Town Council

Your Councillors

Mayor and Council Chairman:

Councillor Richard Judge

Councillor Sheila Bentley (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor Aidan Higgins

Councillor Lewis Morgan

Councillor David Noland

Councillor Stephen Morton

Councillor Virpi Kettu

Councillor Winston Feather

Councillor Malcolm Courcier

Councillor Annabel Heseltine

Councillor Brian McDaid

Councillor Claire Nash

Councillor Peter Madeley

Councillor Robert Heseltine

Councillor Chris Harbron

Councillor Karen McIntyre

Elections took place in May 2022 with 7 new Councillors appointed to the Council.

Skipton Town Council Mission

Statement

“To proactively represent and provide high-quality, efficient, and cost effective services to local residents. To work with others to help secure a robust economy for the Town - and to enhance and develop Skipton as a high-profile, vibrant and thriving visitor destination”

In 2022 the Council adopted an interim Strategic Plan for 2023/24, with plans in place to produce a new Strategic Plan over the year, consulting with residents, businesses and community groups to find out what is important to them and what they feel the Council should prioritise.

'I am very proud to be Skipton Town Mayor. Living in such a beautiful and unique area with rolling hills of Yorkshire Dales on our doorstep.

With a fantastic mix of events, culture, history and friendly welcoming faces.

Visitors are warmly welcomed to enjoy this very special part of the world.'

Councillor Richard Judge— Mayor of
Skipton and Chairman of the Council



Honorary Freeman

In May 2022, Cllr Karen McIntyre, performed one of her last duties as Town Mayor, by bestowing the title of Honorary Freeman on Mr Harry Dowson. Cllr McIntyre also accepted the presentation of a ceremonial mace from the Skipton Branch of the Royal British Legion.



Local schools took part in marking the occasion of Remembrance Sunday and 100 years of the Cenotaph by painting stones, which were then placed in the shapes of poppies in Holy Trinity Church yard. The Cenotaph was also professionally cleaned in November 2022, with the help of a grant from the War Memorials Trust. And for the first time a hologram marking Remembrance Sunday was projected onto the side of Skipton Castle with the support of Hunters and Skipton Castle.

Supporting the Market

During 2022/2023 9 Traders have taken advantage of the Markets Monday Incentive Scheme. The scheme allows traders who haven't tried trading on a market before to borrow a gazebo and weights and trade free of charge for a period on a Monday to see if having a market stall works well for their business before they invest in the equipment.

6 new traders have joined the market as regular traders.

14 charities have had a stall on the market to raise awareness of their charity.

The Market staff have implemented a new cardboard recycling scheme. In the first 8 weeks of the scheme 3840L of cardboard have been collected.

Plans are also being put in place for Skipton's first Youth Market. This will take place in June 2023.

The Market Team have also worked with North Yorkshire Council to implement a parking permit scheme to allow traders to park their vehicles on their pitch.



Sustainability Goals

Skipton Town Council adopted four sustainability goals in 2021, each Committee must ensure that the Sustainability goals adopted by Skipton Town Council are actively promoted and adhered to.

The Goals are:

- Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

In 2022/23 the Council have continued to work towards achieving these goals by establishing a lead Councillor for Sustainability, Cllr Lewis Morgan, and setting up a Sustainability Working Group.

All departments within the Council have been looking at ways that they can make their practice more sustainable, such as having criteria for applicants who wish to trade at events to adhere to and setting up the cardboard recycling scheme for Market Traders.



Councillors also took part in a litter pick in April and May 2023, organised by the Community Safety Working Group. The aim is for the litter picks to become regular events.

Community Safety Working Group

In December 2022 the first meeting of the Community Safety Group took place. The meeting was attended by Councillors, the Police, Craven College, SELFA, Craven District Council, Skipton BID, the Youth Council and the North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. This multiagency group now meets every two months to discuss issues affecting the town. The group is also attended by STAND and secondary schools within Skipton.

Allotments

Water supply issues were resolved at Burnside Chapel Allotments. All plots at the 3 allotment sites measured. A new path has been installed at Middletown Allotments to allow easy access through to the Recreation Ground, and work has begun to create a communal compost area. New plots have been created by dividing the pony plots at Middletown so that more people from the waiting list can be allocated a plot to begin growing fruit and vegetables.



Improvements to our parks

Improvements were made to the children's play area at Burnside Recreation Ground.

Work has begun on developing a strategy for the parks to ensure that the Council has clear future plans for what is needed in each of the 11 parks the Council manages.

The Estates Team worked with Skipton's 3rd Scout Group to plant a variety of indigenous trees at Raikes Road Recreation Ground.

Incredible Edible also planted fruit trees at Raikes Road, with plans in place to install some planters there in the coming year.

Incredible Edible also continue to maintain the orchard at Middletown Recreation Ground



Wildflowers

Following the stomping in of Wildflower seeds at 6 trial sites, the wildflowers on grass verges continued through the summer. Areas were identified that worked well, and areas where mowing would continue to be carried out. The Estates Team also allowed areas in the parks to grow to increase habitats for pollinators. New equipment planned for 2023/24 will allow this project to continue with the Estates Team being able to cut and collect cuttings and compost them at the allotments. This is a very rare bee orchid that has appeared at the Rockwood drive / Park View trial area.



Jubilee Celebrations

Prior to the sad passing of Her Majesty the Queen, Skipton was able to take part in the national celebrations of the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

The High Street was closed to traffic to enable a street party with entertainment to take place. The Mayor and other Councillors planted a Tree to mark the occasion in Holy Trinity Church yard.

The Town Council also supported Parish School with a road closure for their parade from school to Holy Trinity church where they performed a re-enactment of the Queen's Coronation Ceremony.



Events– Summer

Summer 2022 saw the return of Skipton's famous Sheep Day, the first since the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The inaugural Skipton Pride in the Park was also held in Aireville Park. The Town Council are working with the Pride Working Group on a Pride event on the High Street for Summer 2023.

Summer 2022 also saw the first Foodie Weekend, held at the Canal Basin. This was a weekend to celebrate local food and drink, with many local bars, restaurants and pubs putting on offers to complement a food and drink market at the Canal Basin, and of course all the fabulous food and drink traders on the High Street Market.



Events– Winter

The Christmas Lights were switched on by Claire Cadman from Skipton Step into Action following being nominated as a local hero.

A lantern parade followed Santa up the High Street. Lantern Making Workshops were held in the weeks running up to the event allowing people to make their own lantern to join in the parade.

The Light Switch On followed the Santa Fun Run, where the Town Council again supported the Rotary Club with their road closure for this fantastic annual event.

The Christmas Markets took place on the High Street on the 4th and 11th December and were again very popular events.



Working with the Community

Skipton Town Council has continued to build on its relationship with the Youth Council, who are an active member of the Community Safety Working Group.

The Friends of the Wilderness and the Friends of Raikes Road Burial Ground are also supported by the Town Council. With the Friends of the Wilderness re-establishing their group following a hiatus during the Covid Pandemic.

There are plans in place to consult with the Community regarding what priorities they feel the Council should focus on as we develop a Strategic Plan to come into effect in 2024.

Staffing, Finance and Governance

Staff Training

A program of staff training continues with training being carried out on Traffic Management for Events, Play Ground Inspections, Fire Marshalls amongst others.

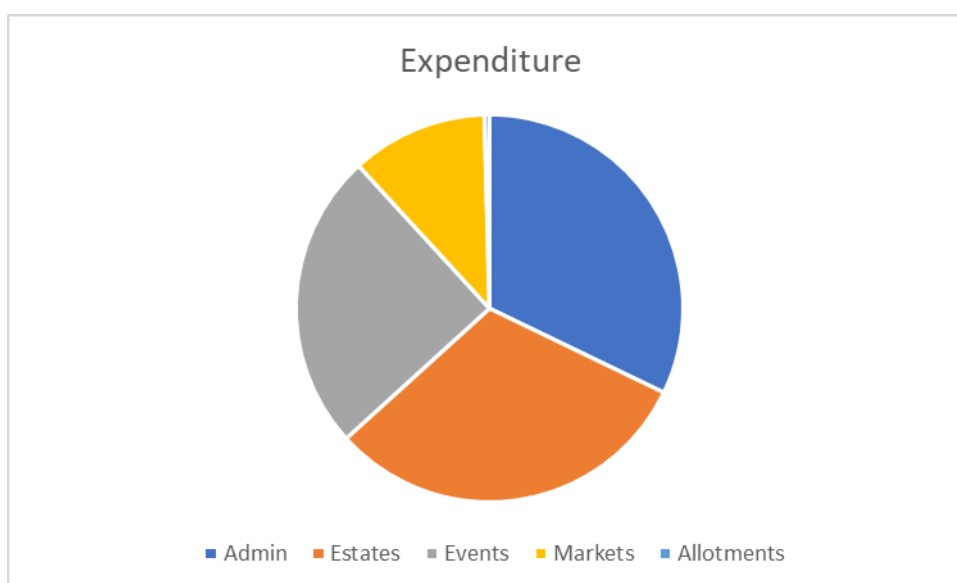
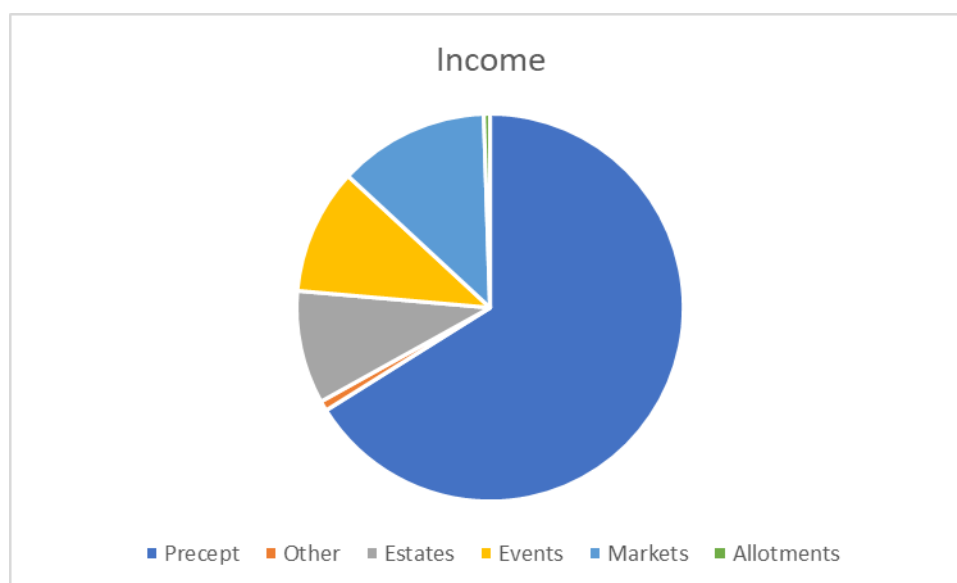
The Council now also has a student from Craven College, who works with the Council's Estate Team two days a week during term time. This is to give them work experience for their Outdoor Management course.

Civility & Respect Pledge

In November 2022 in collaboration with the SLCC, NALC, OVW and County Associations the Council signed the Civility and Respect Pledge and adopted the Councillor/Officer Protocol.



Finance



The Town Councils Annual Governance and Financial Statements can be viewed on the Council website. The Town Council precept for 2022/23 was £519,491. Other income was received from Market Trader Fees, Income from Town Council run events, Section 106 funding and allotment rents. Allotment rents remained unchanged from the previous year.

At the budget meeting in Dec 2022 the Council agreed to request £519,614 precept for the 2023/24 financial year.